

DECEMBER 2014 HAPPENINGS

Advent & Christmas

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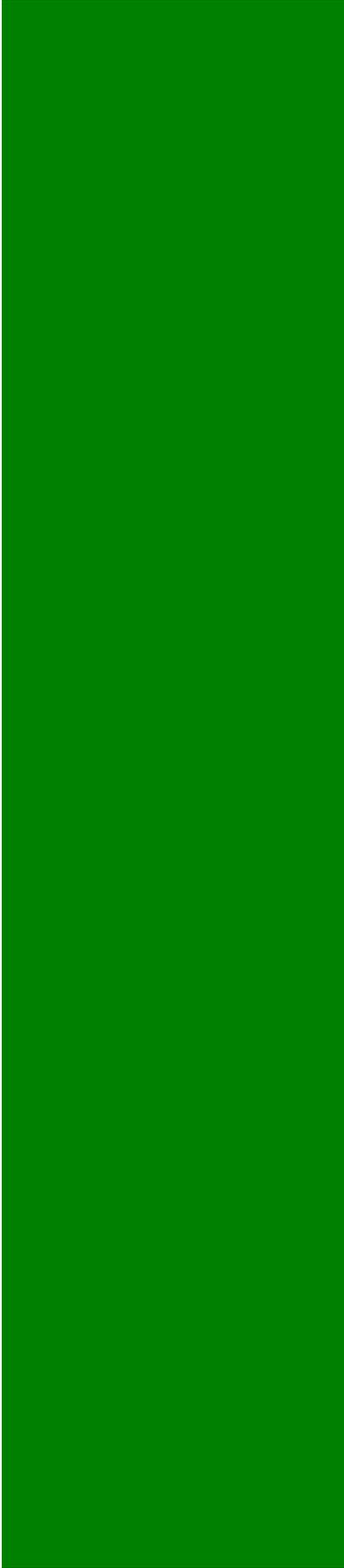
Hope, Faith, Joy, Love Themes of Advent

Many light their Advent Candles and
give to them these names:

Hope, Faith, Joy and Love

Advent is a time of expectation and preparation and the colors violet or purple are used in vestments and decorations. Purple is a color that was reserved for use by royalty, and so it is used in Advent to symbolize the coming of Christ our King, as celebrated at Christmas and as we prepare for the coming of God's Kingdom.

The symbol for Advent is the Advent Wreath.



Since circles have no beginning and no end, the circular shape of the wreath is used to symbolize God the Father and eternal life. It represents a custom that Christians have followed for centuries. The circle of the wreath recalls all the years the people waited for the Messiah.

The four candles on the wreath remind us that there are four weeks in Advent. Each week one additional candle is lighted, so by the end of Advent all four are lit. The candles remind us that we are preparing for Jesus, the Light of the World.

Traditionally, each of the four candles on an Advent wreath has their own meaning.

- The First Sunday of Advent symbolizes hope with the Prophet's Candle reminding us that Jesus is coming.
- The Second Sunday of Advent symbolizes

faith with the Bethlehem Candle reminding us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

- The Third Sunday of Advent is known as Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is the Latin word for rejoice (joy). The candle lit for the third week of Advent is rose or pink, representing the hope for the coming of Jesus.
- The Fourth Sunday of Advent symbolizes peace with the Angel's Candle reminding us of the message

of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

- A fifth candle, known as the Christ Candle, may be used in the center of the wreath. The center white candle is lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, and denotes the culmination of Advent. The color white reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins. His birth was for His death, His death was for our birth.

Advent begins the liturgical year four Sundays before December 25th and ends at the Christmas Vigil Mass. This season has two meanings each reflected by the term "advent" which means "coming." First, this season is a period to prepare for the celebration of Christmas. Second, it is a time to reflect and prepare for Christ's second coming at the end of time.

Blessings to All!
The St. James Altar Guild



Christmas Flower Memorials

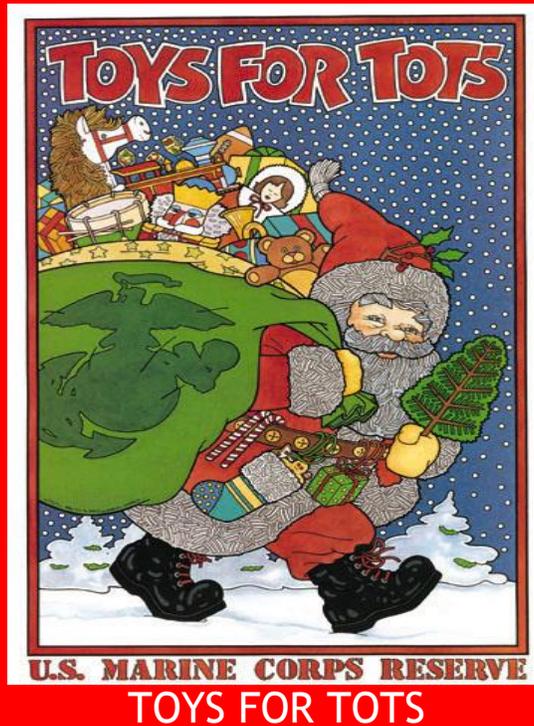
If you would like to contribute toward our Christmas Flowers, we are accepting donations as memorials for "Thanksgiving for" or "In Memory of." Envelopes and forms are in the back of the church. Please make check payable to "St. James Church" or cash is acceptable also. If you wish to have your Memorial listed in the Christmas Service Bulletin, please be sure we receive the completed form by Sunday, December 14th.

Thank you!



"The Giving Tree"
Mittens, Gloves, Hats and Gloves

As you enter our double red doors, you will find "The Giving Tree." Please bring mittens, gloves, hats and scarves of all sizes and colors for Christmas stockings that will be given to our needy neighbors via Pettengill House. Donations are accepted up to Sunday, December 14th. **Bless you!**



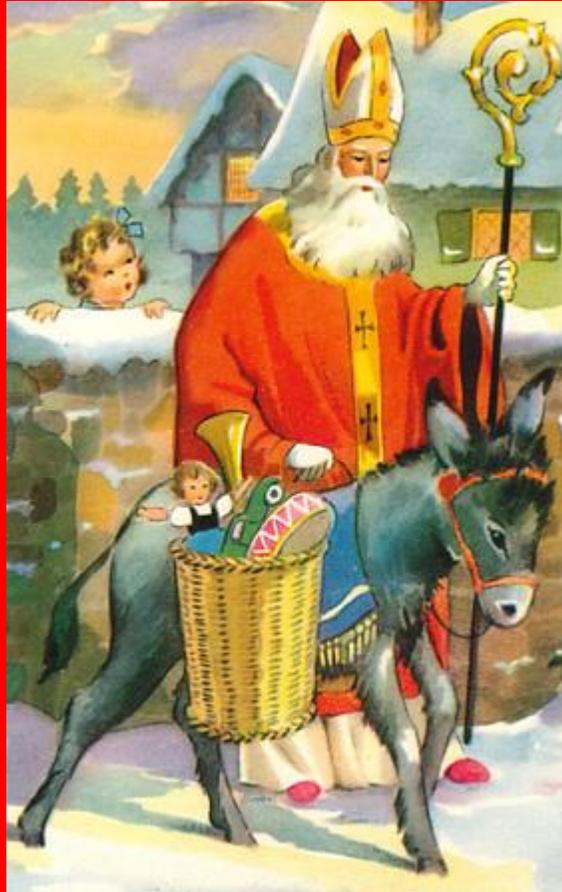
As in years past, we will be collecting a new, unwrapped gift to help children less fortunate during this Christmas season.

Please bring in a new, unwrapped gift on Sunday, December 7th to donate to Toys for Tots.

If you are unable to go shopping for a gift but would like to donate to this worthy cause, you may make a monetary donation as well. Cash or check payable to "Marine Toys for Tots Foundation."

Gifts for children of all ages are greatly appreciated.

You may also donate online by visiting the [Marine Toys for Tots Foundation website!](#)



The Feast of Saint Nicholas Celebration

On Sunday, December 7th we will be celebrating The Feast of Saint Nicholas. Join Saint Nicholas during coffee hour for photos, cake and fun activities for the children. Buy a box of cookies during our Annual Cookie Walk hosted by the Youth Group. All proceeds will go to the local Toys for Tots charity.



Cocoa On the Steps & Christmas Party.

Join our Youth Group during the Saturday, December 6th Santa Parade in Amesbury with Cocoa on the steps of the Church at 3:30pm.

Immediately following the parade, the Youth will have a Christmas Party in the Parish Hall. All are welcome to join in the fun.



The Greening of the Church

All hands on deck for the Greening of the Church on
Sunday, December 21st

Join us after the 10am service before hospitality.

Everyone is invited to help in the hanging of greens, garlands, holly and wreaths as we prepare our sanctuary for Christmas Eve. If you have Holly at home, bring some with you!

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services

Wednesday, December 24, 2014

At 4pm, we will present our Godly Play Pageant and Music with Holy Eucharist, Rite II. This is a family-friendly service.

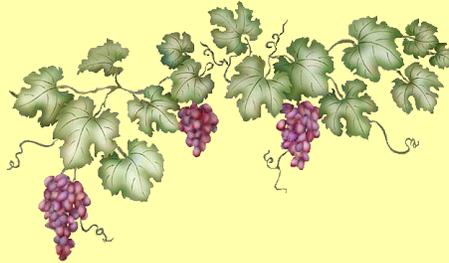
At 8pm, we will celebrate Holy Eucharist, Rite I with Music and the St. James Choir.



Thursday, December 25th
Christmas Day

On Christmas Day, we will celebrate one service, Holy Eucharist, Rite II at 10am.

Stewardship



The Stewardship Committee recently mailed out a Stewardship Letter to your home. We hope you had the time to read and discern how you may pledge.

This is the time of year that the Finance Committee and Vestry prepare and complete the annual budget for the upcoming year.

Pledging is our primary source of income, and St. James depends on these commitments and parishioners' generous giving.

For information or questions you may have on Stewardship, you may contact:

Meg Grant
mtsgrant@gmail.com
(978-388-1175)

Jamie Grant
jamiegrant66@yahoo.com
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Walk in Faith

Search Committee Update

The Search Committee of St. James has been in discernment with Rector candidates over the last several months. After initial Skype interviews, committee members have taken turns visiting the candidates in their parishes to hear each preach, then share in fellowship over lunch. We moved forward with several to have them visit Amesbury and interview with the Vestry and Search Committee.

On November 17, the Search Committee met and voted unanimously to recommend one candidate to the Vestry to become our next Rector at St. James. The Vestry met on November 18 and voted to call this candidate as Rector.

We are moving forward with the necessary steps at the diocesan level, such as discussions between the Office of Transitional Ministries and meetings with the Bishop.

We look forward to the opportunity to officially call our new Rector and are excited about the possibilities and promise of new beginnings.



November 2014 Middle School Retreat at the Barbara C. Harris Camp

On November 21, 22 & 23, 2014, as members of the Diocesan Youth Council, Luke and Adam Janik, Daniel Bennett, Jilleen Collins and Mariana Sanborn, went to the Barbara C. Harris Camp, to prepare for the arrival of Middle Schoolers, for the retreat! These young Adults did an amazing job, of planning the theme (The Tree of Life), picking the scriptures, leading small groups and planning, organizing and leading every aspect of this retreat! St. James Amesbury you all have so much to be proud of!

Then, Dawn Schmidt, Youth Group Leader and Kim Potts, Pre-Confirmation Teacher, gathered up a few more of our Youth, Meghan Emery, Hayley Crane, Anna Iacobucci, Nick Bennett, and Elena Sanborn and headed for the retreat! They made their traditional stop at McDonalds in Epping, and then arrived at the Camp just before 7 pm. Friday evening was filled with worship and some great music by the band called The Spark!!

Throughout the weekend, they all worked in small groups, sang wonderful songs, played games and the youth had workshops, while Dawn and Kim participated in the Mentor workshop on "Team Building and Engaging your Youth".

Saturday Night was filled with more worship, lots of music, singing and dancing! Youth Leaders Dawn and Kim watched our youth transform and build new friendships, not only with other youth but with Jesus!! To say that we are blessed, just doesn't cover the emotions felt as all left on Sunday afternoon!

God is good all the time!!! All the time God is good!

[The picture above is of the DYC leaders from St. James, Amesbury, the Middle School youth and the band members along with Dawn and Kim! Missing from this picture unfortunately are Mariana and Meghan! Also pictured is Becca from Christ Church, Andover, who spent the weekend with us!]



December Food Donations

During the month of December, please make donations of Instant Oatmeal, Pasta Sauce, Peanut Butter and Hearty Soups for Our Neighbors' Table.

Also, personal items such as deodorant, mouthwash, toothpaste, toothbrush, etc., are always in need.

Let us give thanks for God's many blessings to us.

<p>QUICK LINKS</p> <p><u>St. James Website!</u></p> <p><u>Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts</u></p> <p><u>Send us an E-mail</u></p>	<p><i>Blessings and Peace to All!</i></p>
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